



CITY OF CLAYTON

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City Council
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September 17, 2015

SENT VIA EMAIL AND U.S. MAIL DELIVERY

Honorable Dave Cortese, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Honorable Julie Pierce, President
Association of Bay Area Governments
101 8th Street
Oakland, CA 94607

**Re: Opposition to MTC Proposal to Transfer ABAG Regional Land Use Planning
Staff and Associated FY 2015-16 Planning Budget to MTC**

Dear MTC Chair Cortese and ABAG President Pierce:

The City of Clayton strongly urges restraint and expresses its grave concern over the recent ploy by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to jerk the Planning and Research function from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to the MTC, effective January 2016. The proposal has not been a collaborative effort between both agencies, numerous stakeholders have not been afforded the opportunity to evaluate the proposal or provide reflective communication regarding its merits or alternatives, and the carnivorous MTC scheme to terminate ABAG's \$3.7 million in funds for this long-held regional land use planning function is government at its worst display.

ABAG's governance as a Council of Governments in the Bay Area since 1961 has been thoughtfully dedicated to the well-being of cities, towns, and counties it serves and represents. It meets the regional planning and research needs related to land use, environmental and water resources protection, disaster resilience, energy efficiencies and hazardous waste mitigation, and provides risk management, financial services and staff training to numerous local governments and employees. Frankly, we are puzzled in a negative way as to why MTC now wishes to siphon the regional land use planning function from ABAG, and by doing so cleverly cause ABAG to wither due to lack of funds. This apparent implication requires careful and inclusive conversation among all public entities represented and impacted by this questionable MTC plan, and our City joins others in requesting this MTC-proposed public policy action be deferred.

The City of Clayton urges MTC to restore ABAG's budget for FY 2015-16 and simultaneously concur its objective necessitates the retention of a third-party neutral consultant to evaluate existing conditions and offer proposals. We should be searching for actions that assist the Bay Area regional planning process to become stronger and more vibrant, not to weaken sister public agencies in the hunt for supremacy. We support a recommendation to constitute a subcommittee of ABAG and MTC governing board members to guide this effort and provide regular progress reports to each entity and stakeholder agency. What has suddenly changed to alter the status quo and cause this unilateral ploy?

Sincerely,



David T. Shuey
Mayor